

XX. *The Description of a Fish, shew'd to the Royal Society by Mr. Ralph Bigland, on March 22, 1749-50: Drawn up by C. Mortimer, M.D. Secret. R.S.*

Read July 5, 1750. **T**HIS Fish is smooth-skinn'd, has no Scales, nor Teeth. It has one erect Fin on its Back, which arises below its Neck, and runs within a little of its Tail. On each Side about the Middle, between its Back and Belly, behind the Gills is a Fin: From the Bottom and Middle of its Belly, a little forward of the Vent, arise a Pair of Fins: From behind the Vent runs one Fin, within a little of the Tail: The Tail-Fin is large and forked. Its Eyes are large; the *Irides* are scarlet, encompassed with a Circle of a gold Colour verg'd with scarlet. Its Nostrils are placed above its Eyes. The Back, and upper Part of the Body quite to the Tail, was of a dark bluc, or violet Colour; these, and the Sides of the Body, which were of a bright green, were all speckled with oblong white Spots; the Chaps were of a pale red; the Nose, Gills, and Belly, were of a silver Colour; and all the Fins of a bright scarlet.

It was 3 Feet 7 Inches long, and 3 Feet 10 Inches round in the thickest Part. It weighed 82 Pounds. Its Mouth is small; its Tongue was thick, almost like a human Tongue in Shape, but rough, and thick-set with Beards or Prickles, which pointed backwards; so that any thing might easily pass down, but could not easily slip back again; therefore these might serve instead of Teeth for retaining its Prey or Food. Its Gills resemble those of a Salmon. Its Body grows very

very taper towards the Tail; and, from being compressed to 10 Inches Thickness, becomes near the Tail almost round, and about 3 Inches thick. The whole Shape of this Fish much resembles the Sea-bream; but it differs in Size, being much larger, and in not having Teeth nor Scales. The Fin standing erect on the Back, has some *Aulei* next the Neck, and rise up 8 Inches; but in the Middle diminishes to 1 Inch; and near the Tail rises again to about 3 Inches. The Belly-Fin opposite to this spreads 3 Inches near the Tail, and diminishes towards the Vent. The Tail-Fin is forked, and spreads 12 Inches. The Gill-Fins are 9 Inches long, and 3 wide at their Basis. The 2 Belly-Fins were 11 Inches long, and 3 wide at their Basis. It seems to me to be a new Species of Fish, not yet described by any Author.

The black Prince, and his Cousin, from *Anamaboe* on the Coast of *Guinea*, and Mr. *Creighton*, formerly Governor of *Capo Corso Castle*, upon seeing this Fish immediately knew it, and said it was common on that Coast, and is very good to eat. The Natives call it *Opah*, and the *English* there call it the *King fish*. I shall therefore retain the *Guinea* Name, with these Characteristics; *O P A H Guiniensium est pisces offens, non squamosus, edentulus; habens unicam in dorso pinnam anterius aculeatam, jone branchias par pinnarum, in medio ventre par pinnarum, ad posticam ventris partem unicum pinnam, caudam forcipatam.*

Mr. *Bigland* says, that, upon opening of it, all its Bowels would have gone into a Quart-Mug; that the Flesh of the fore Part was firm, and look'd like Beef, and the hinder Part like fine Veal; that the Bones were like those of Quadrupeds; particularly the

the Shoulder-blades, which resembled those of Sheep. [See an Article in the *Scots Magazine* for October 1748. printed at *Edinburgh* in 8vo.] In a Letter to me, he adds, that probably this was a [Pelagian or] Ocean Fish, wandring by chance into the Frith of *Forth*; and, by the Tide ebbing, being left upon a considerable Shoal, or flat Sand, near *Leith*, was discover'd from Land in a State of Distress; where-upon some Fishermen plunged into the Sea, and with a Net surrounded it, and brought it to Shore.

XXI. A Letter from John Burton M. D. to C. Mortimer M. D. & Secr. R. S. concerning the Extirpation of an Excrecence from the Womb.

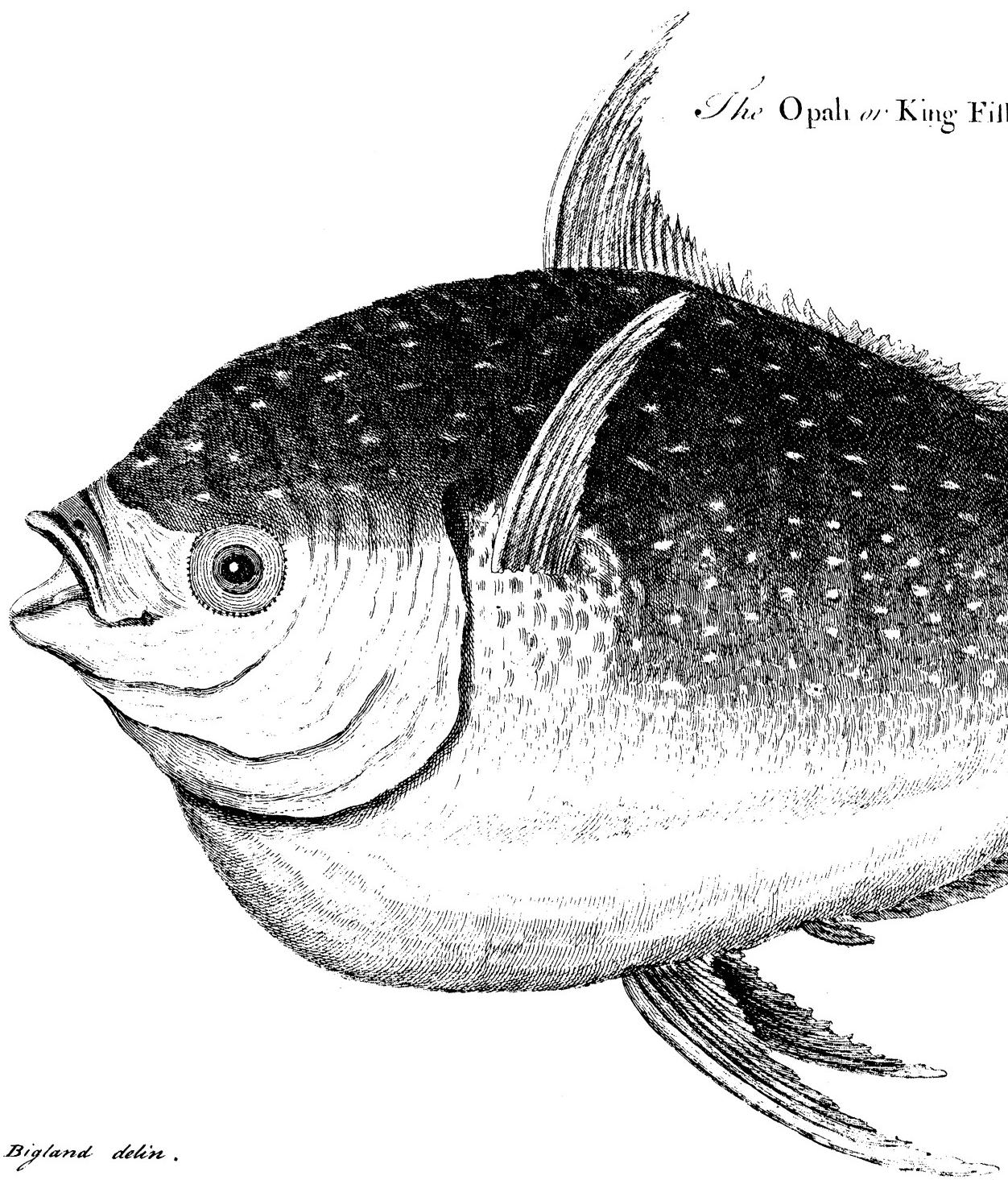
SIR,

Read July 5. 1750. I HAVE at last got a Drawing of an Excrecence * growing from the Inside of the *Os Tincæ* on the right Side; which I herewith send you, (see TAB. I. Fig. 6.) along with as full and perfect an Account of the Case as I can.

The Wife of one *Chapman*, a Whitesmith, at *Selby*, ten Miles off, upwards of seven Years ago lay in of her last Child, and had a tolerable easy Labour: Soon after which, she had what she called the *Fluor albus*, that continued ever since, and increased upon her; insomuch that she says, she has sometimes

* It is exactly the Dimensions of the Original, which weighed 5 Ounces and a half. That Part below the pricked Line appeared out of the *Vagina*; that above reach'd from the *Labia* to the *Os Uteri*.

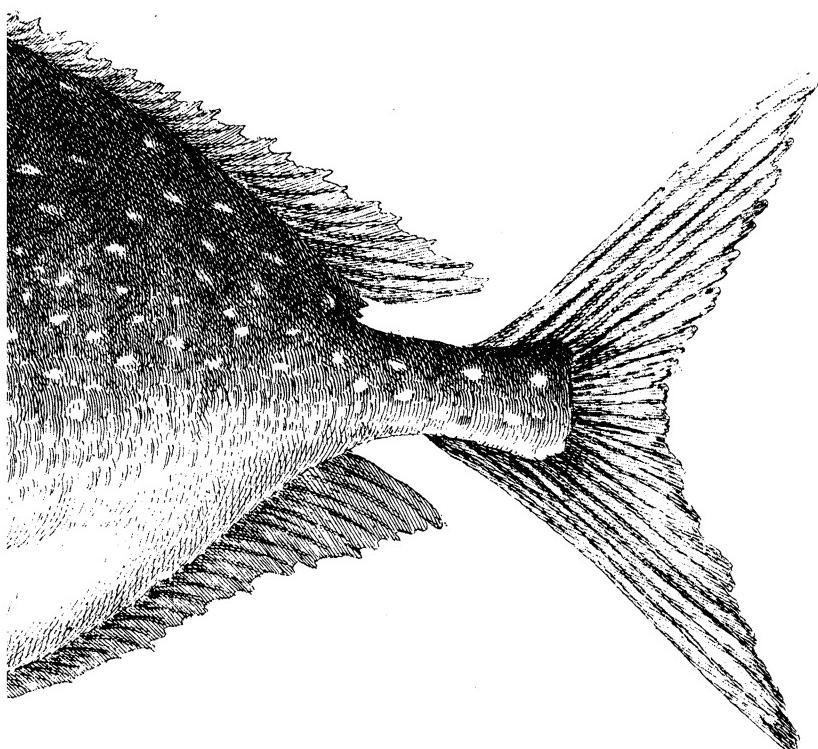
The Opah or King Fish



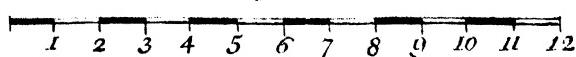
R. Bigland delin.

Philos. Trans. N^o 495 TAB. IV. p 548.

Fig Fish.

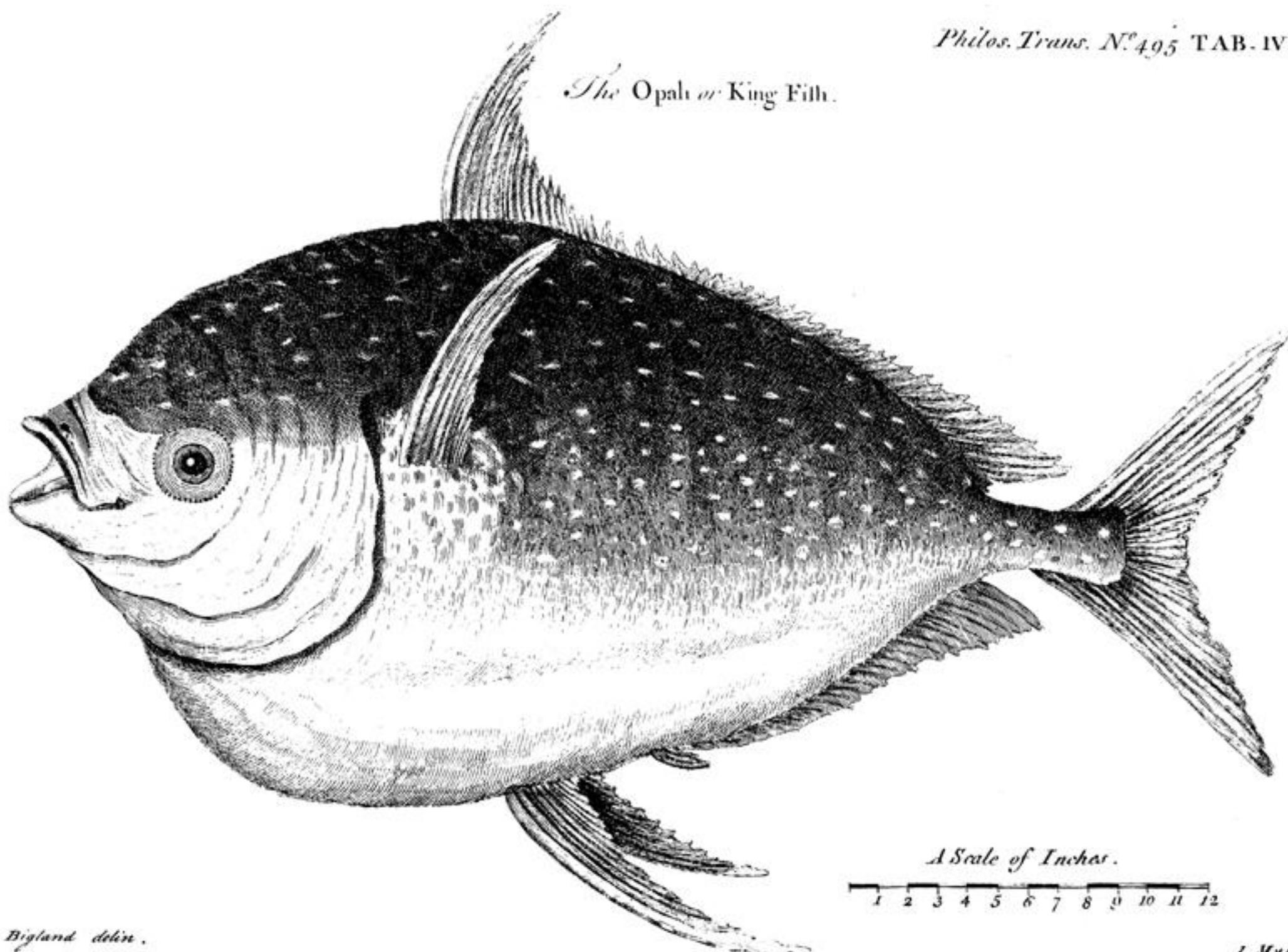


A Scale of Inches.



J. Mynde Sc.

The Opah or King Fish.



A Scale of Inches.

